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BOOK REVIEW
ASPECTE FUNDAMENTALE ALE TRADUCTOLOGIEI
APPLICATE
FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF APPLIED
TRANSLATION STUDIES

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ASPECTE FUNDAMENTALE ALE TRADUCTOLOGIEI APLICATE (*Fundamental Aspects of Applied Translation Studies*), recently published at Casa Cărții de Știință Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, is a collective volume that focuses on translation studies from both theoretical and practical points of view. It encompasses a wide thematic range, varying from conceptual approach towards translation (namely its definition, the basic notions one must master when working in this field and others) to a pragmatic one (where it provides an analysis of some functional features, such as poetic and dramatic texts' translation, medieval texts' translation, phraseology in translation, etc.).

This collective volume is structured into three main chapters, further divided into subchapters, written by four contributors: Professor Mihaela Moraru PhD, Lecturer Teodora Boboc PhD, Lecturer Roman Petrașuc PhD and PhD Student Costin Chivu. The first two chapters tackle several theoretical aspects, while the third is entirely dedicated to what is conventionally called "case studies" (as can be seen in the volume's *Table of contents*).

The first chapter, *General guidelines concerning translation*, written by Lecturer Teodora Boboc, comprises no less than eight sections (each of which dealing with a separate topic), which will be detailed below. The first section is on translation status – is it science or art?, where several translation definitions from three cultural spaces (Russian, English and Romanian) are discussed, in order to prove a valid point, namely that translation belongs, in fact, to both poles, according to its nature, i.e. if it involves translating specialised texts or if it is supposed to render the content of literary works. The second section deals with what should be translated and how (here the author provides a diachronic analysis of the translation process in various

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periods of time, along with the potential errors in translation, according to A. Berman's viewpoint (2000). The third section's focus is on the types of texts that translators may encounter (mainly non-literary or literary texts, with their subsequent segmentations). This is a section that facilitates the link between theory and practice and all three chapters of this collective volume. And finally, the last section is on the necessary competences of a translator – are they supposed to be *visible* or *invisible* in the target text - here Lawrence Venuti's theory (1995) is discussed with solid arguments and personal opinions on the matter. Moreover, it examines the dichotomic structure *equivalence* versus *adaptation* in translation, that points these concepts out as complementary strategies and on *self-translation* – that may occur not only for literary texts (since it is a well-known fact that many writers have done so in their career), but also for scientific ones. Also, 20th century to current translation theories are presented, with a concise description of the most popular principles and translation and globalisation, where the concept of *adopting* (i.e. borrowing words) is opposed to that of *adapting* the information.

The second chapter, *Considerations on literary texts' translation*, written by Professor Mihaela Moraru, examines two of the most difficult types of translation, namely *poetry* translation and *dramatic texts' translation*. Here it is also worth noting that Professor Mihaela Moraru is specialised in the field of Translation Studies and has published several books on the matter (see, for example, *The Aesthetics of Translation*, Bucharest University Press, 2000; *Translation Practice*, Bucharest University Press, 2002; *Diachronic Translation between Art and Science*, Bucharest University Press, 2003).

Speaking of *poetry translation*, we must say that we agree with the viewpoints stated by the author, since poetry is more often than not translated in “pairs”, meaning that there are two persons involved – one that masters the language and another that has the ability to make the “final product” (i.e. target text) rhyme. Rarely is the same person able to render both meaning and form, in the given context. Besides, when there are two persons involved, there arises the question of responsibility in translation and of how much is lost by processing the source text twice, while when a poet translates poetry, the “stylistic transfer” between the two poets becomes imminent, more often than not shadowing the author in favour of the translator. Professor Mihaela Moraru illustrates these hypotheses using the translation of Vladimir Mayakovsky's poetry from Russian into Romanian, where she observes that the translators resort to various translation strategies, such as: using calques, idiomatic equivalence, modulation and even transliteration in their attempt to “comply with the main features of the source text”, only to end up “correcting or rewriting some authentic text fragments” (159). Also, the author discusses the phraseology and sayings that occur in Mayakovsky's poetry, which are valid evidence for the complexity of poetry translation.

Further on, in dealing with *dramatic texts' translation*, two questions arise: *is* the dramatic text literature and if so, *how* should such a text be translated – considering the target text is intended to be *read* or to be *played*? The answers that Professor Mihaela Moraru provides are relevant: 1. that the dramatic text is, in fact, the one that connects literature and art, and 2. that “*theatre comes to life due to actors' performance on the stage*” (165), meaning that the true goal here is to translate the source text in a *playable* manner. Moreover, the translator that works with dramatic texts should be, Professor Mihaela Moraru argues, “*a theatre enthusiast, a regular viewer*” (170), in order to adequately take into account the text and its staging, the actors and the public. In her presentation of the theoretical background, Professor Mihaela Moraru mentions renowned writers, linguists and researchers, such as: A.N. Ostrovsky and I.L. Caragiale; J. Levy and S. Bassnett; S. Totzeva and C. Iliescu and many others, whose main interest may or may not have been theatre and dramatic texts, but who have managed, however, to formulate valuable principles concerning literary texts' translation. Of equal importance here is the fact that the author's rich personal experience in the theatrical world has given her the chance to enhance her writing with some empirical examples (see page 170), that undoubtedly make the reading much more captivating and colourful, as a theatre play should be.

The third chapter, *From theory to practice. Case studies*, contains seven subchapters, five of which also were written by Professor Mihaela Moraru, one by Lecturer Roman Petrașuc and the another by PhD Student Costin Chivu. Here the focus is no longer limited to literary texts (though plenty of writers are mentioned), since the chapter also includes a case study on socio-political terminology translation from Russian into Romanian and another one on phraseology in Russian, Ukrainian and Romanian.

The first case study deals with Esenin's literary creation, more specifically with the *Functions and Symbolism of Chromatic Epithets in S. Esenin's Poetry and its Translation into Romanian*, a continuation of the first subchapter of the previous chapter. This is a well-documented and solidly justified analysis of how Romanian translators (such as George Lesnea, Ioanichie Olteanu and Zaharia Stancu) have succeeded in rendering the chromatic essence of Esenin's poetry. A few considerations on the reception of Esenin's literary creations are inserted here, with the role of offering a broader context for the chosen topic.

The next two case studies focus on A.S. Pushkin, but from an innovative point of view, because the nucleus here is given by Pushkin's tales, also written in verses, and the archaisms that appear in his works. The idea of examining the ways these archaisms were translated into Romanian – that is, by complying to the stylistic register or, on the opposite, by departing from it are strongly related to both the second and the first chapter of the collective volume, as they subsequently approach the translator's competences in rendering literary texts.

The case study that concerns *The significance of dialectal elements in V. Rasputin's prose and their Romanian equivalents* brings to the reader's attention an important aspect in translation – that of rendering dialectal elements by using regionalisms, which makes the choice an extremely subjective one, considering that in the Romanian language there is a large number of dialects, that varies at least from three (in Wallachia, Moldavia, and Banat) to five (also covering Crişana and Maramureş).

Even if at first sight the following topic may seem outside the field, in fact it fits into this collective volume as it is linked to the idea of translation as a science and mastering terminology. Moreover, the option in favour of socio-political terms provides the opportunity to illustrate negative phenomena in translation, such as interference of mother tongue with foreign language learning.

The sixth subchapter, *A contrastive analysis of structural-semantic values of phraseology in Russian, Ukrainian and Romanian languages*, written by Lecturer Roman Petraşuc, is further divided into three subsections, namely: idioms containing *numbers*, idioms containing *animals* and idioms containing *colours*. Though in the title, only three languages are included, the study encompasses far more examples, like those from Bulgarian, English or French, with a total of six languages for one idiom, where possible. From a theoretical point of view, phraseology is mainly translated by using adequate equivalents, semi-adequate equivalents or non-adequate equivalents (considering the similarity level between the source language idiom and target language idiom). However, this study is not by far a mere practical illustration of these three strategies, since the cultural elements are also thoroughly discussed (for example, why do we use in English, Russian and Ukrainian the number *seven* – see *seventh heaven*, while in Romanian it is, in fact, *nine*?). The symbolism of various animals and colours is also explored, according to the geographical and cultural space that is taken into account. Another interesting aspect here is the link between colours and emotions, their various interpretations from one nation to another.

The last case study, that investigates the translation from Latin into Russian and Romanian of *De ente et essentia* (*On Being and Essence* of Thomas Aquinas) is a contrastive analysis of several text fragments, that evolves around the idea of addition to or compression of the source text, either by means of explanation or omission (though it is rarely encountered in this particular case). Such additions lead to certain transformations “at the level of semantics, word formation and in the relationship established between various grammatical categories”, but they are meant to render “not only the words, but also their spirit” (330), which is the target of any translation that aims to be called adequate. This contribution to the volume has a significant degree of originality, given the fact that the translations of Thomas Aquinas' works have not been intensely studied so far. Moreover, it brings to the reader's attention the correspondences between Latin, Romanian and Russian languages, with Romanian having both a Latin and a Slavic substrate. The

comparison of two Russian versions and two Romanian ones with the original in Latin turns the approach from an interlingual one to an intralingual one, which is also worth analysing.

Last but not least, the cohesion of this collective volume stands out as a strong quality, mainly due to the skilful organisation provided by its editor. Lecturer Teodora Boboc has managed to systematise this vast and heterogenous material and to present it in a well-structured and well-argued manner.

To conclude, the collective volume we have reviewed proves to be a useful tool and interesting read not only for specialists, but also for the “fans of the genre”, who might wish to find out more about Translation Studies and their applicability in various contexts.

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